

"ANOINTING WITH OIL."—REVIEW.

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In looking over the contents of EVANGELIST No. 46, Nov. 20, 1895, my attention was attracted by an article by brother J. C. Cassel, under the above heading. We are in the habit of looking for Brother C. to say something when he talks; and while he says many good and valuable things we are sorry to say, he also says some things that in my limited scope of comprehension, I cannot approve as matter profitable to be published in our church paper. And I regret to say that the article in question is of this character. I have some criticisms to offer, to which I ask his indulgence and forbearance. After quoting from the epistle of James, the text upon which is based the practice of anointing the sick with oil, he says, "Every now and then I read in the EVANGELIST of some aged, hopelessly afflicted person being prayed over, and anointed with oil in the name of the Lord, ostensibly to die." "This" he says, "is an incomprehensible performance to me. Well I suppose it is." He says, "there is neither precept nor example for it anywhere in God's word." (That is for anointing people to die.) Well, who said there is? I am sure I never heard of it in the Brethren church, and I think I ought to know, having been in the church much longer than Brother Cassel, and having performed this holy service many, many times, and I never heard of it being done, that the sick would, could, or might die. Farther on, he says, "Until recently I was in utter ignorance as to why our brethren anoint as they do. And when I was told that the *raising up* in James 5: 15, referred to the resurrection, I was thoroughly astonished."

Allow me to ask Brother Cassel in all candor, Who is authorized to declare the faith of the Brethren church on this question? She has never to my knowledge, defined her views on this, and in fact many other subjects. How then can he even insinuate that the church through her elders anoints people to die, and that the Lord may raise them up at the last day? But it would seem that some irresponsible party told him so. Brother Cassel being one of the Joint-high Commission, will please accept a pointer as to the general demoralization and disintegration we are liable to fall into through our irresponsible system, (or want of system) of church government; this much by way of digression. Now to the subject. Brother C. evidently labors under, the delusion that, if the Apostle James had in view the resurrection it may mean that and that only. This is always the trouble

with one idea men. They forget the all important fact, that in all our doings, all our desires, and all our prayers, *this spirit* must possess us, *not my will, but thine O Lord be done.*

We must not be dictatorial in this service of anointing any more than in anything else. We must, or should do our duty, according to the letter and spirit of the word of inspiration and leave the result with God. Brother Cassel thinks that any thought of the resurrection in the text, is altogether foreign to the Apostles mind. In this we join issue with him. He gives five reasons which we shall try to examine in all candor and in the fear of God.

1. "The resurrection from the dead is to be universal, and anointing cannot make it any more so." Then the declaration of Christ in John 6: 40, "I will raise him up at the last day" is also out of place for the same reason.

2. "The resurrection is not under consideration in that part of the epistle of James." This is simply a question of veracity between Brother James and Brother Cassel as we shall see further on in the investigation.

3. Suppose a case, or state of things, that nobody claims, we rule it out of order.

4. "James 5: 14-16 refers pointedly, clearly and definitely to sickness, and healing and to nothing else, except to the pardon of incidental sin." This is only a restatement in different language of his "secondly" and we will answer it in answering his "fifthly" which reads as follows: The term, raising up, which James uses is not the same as is used in other scriptures relating to the resurrection from the dead. Then he dives into Greek, and "when Greek meets Greek, then comes the tug of war." Lookout Brother Cassel, a Greek scholar might get some fine amusement.

He says, the original term for *raising up*, is *Egein*. Wrong you are already, the Greek in the text is *Egerai*. While the word in general use denoting the resurrection is *Anastasis* as you say. But now for your definitions.

Anastasis, "The act of rising from a sitting or reclining position, from a seat, or the ground, a rising up, a starting up, from an ambush, a rising up, or recovery from a state of weakness or sickness." In ecclesiastical writing, resurrection, insurrection, sedition, revolt, etc. Not one word in all these definitions about rising from the dead, although we believe that to be also included in the meaning of the word "*Egerai*." This also has a great variety of meanings in the different forms

or tenses of the word, and one of them is, "To awaken from the dead." So that Brother Cassel's "secondly" "thirdly" "fourthly" and "fifthly" all, fall flatly to the ground in one conglomerate mass, if such lexicographers as the learned Donnegan can be regarded as authority.

The sum of the whole matter is, James says, by inspiration, "The prayer of faith shall save the sick and the Lord shall raise him up." The Lord has reserved to Himself the right to either raise the sick to health in this life, or to raise him to eternal life and glory in the next, and I am not going to dictate to him, as to which he shall do, but in this as in all else try to say, "*Thy will be done.*"

But that divine healing hobby requires all this bolstering up to make it stand. And I believe I said once before that I can drive a four horse team right through it. I feel able to do so yet. The very fact that God authorized the Apostle James to leave this teaching upon record is evidence that the day of common and indiscriminate miracle workings was past. Why not say to the sick, rise up and walk, as they did in the day of general miracles? Why this anointing and prayer? Why not say, "gold and silver have we none." Oh, I am afraid if it were not for gold and silver, the divine healers of the present day would be as scarce as blackbirds in a snowstorm. But to cut the matter short. If the claims are well founded that the working of miracles is still in vogue as in the times of the Apostles, then not only healing diseases, but raising the dead should be performed. Why do we never hear of these latter day worthies raising the dead? I believe I could tell, but I do not wish to do it, in deference to the feelings of some whom I respect, but who have to some extent been ensnared by this cunning craftiness. Here I will make a fair and honorable proposition to Brother Cassel, or any one else who feels like accepting it. We have at Ashland, O., a College property that is very valuable, but we are in debt, and various plans have been tried to raise the money to pay the debt, but so far without the success that is needed. The fact is, we are like Christ and the disciples were, too poor to raise by ordinary means the necessary tribute money.

Now come out to Ohio, stop off at Pittsburg, where are many iron and steel workers, get a hook made, it will require a large hook, better have it made of Bessemer steel, then go up to Lake Erie and catch a large fish, get men to help haul him out. Provide yourself with a couple of crowbars, to pry his mouth open wide, take out a large piece of mon-